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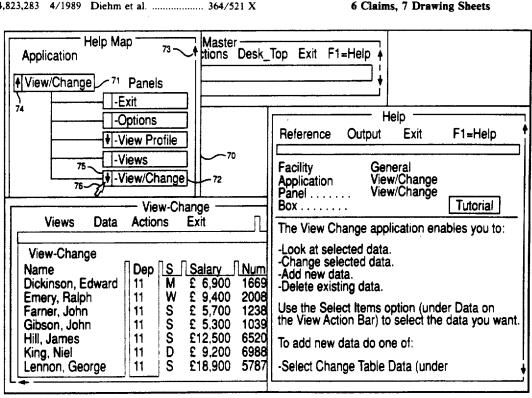
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ABSTRACT [57]

Help is provided to the user of a data processing system having a work station, including a display, and input means including a visible on-screen indicator and a selection means, in response to a request from the user, information on the current state of the system is used to address a store of hierarchical help text information, thereby providing contextual help text which is displayed in a separate window on the display screen alongside information related to the task in hand. A help map function is available which displays concurrently, separately from the help text, a portion of a hierarchical map of the stored help text to be replaced by new help text corresponding to the selected map entry.



[54] HELP PROVISION IN A DATA PROCESSING **SYSTEM** [75] Inventors: Justin J. C. Richards, Warwick; Kenneth Williams, Learnington Spa, both of England [73] Assignee: **International Business Machines** Corporation, Armonk, N.Y. [21] Appl. No.: 469,549 [22] PCT Filed: Jul. 20, 1988 [86] PCT No.: PCT/GB88/00584 § 371 Date: Mar. 20, 1990 § 102(e) Date: Mar. 20, 1990

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395/160 Field of Search 364/518, 521, 146, 188, 364/200 MS File, 900 MS File; 340/721, 734

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